

and comprises the administrations of Governors CASWELL, NASH, BURKE and MARTIN.

The correspondence of Governor BURKE, preserved by his only descendant until her removal from the State, and then left in the possession of a highly respectable citizen of the County of Orange, was readily obtained, and was found to be a most interesting contribution to our Revolutionary History. Finding that he was a distinguished member of our own Provincial Congress, a delegate from the State to the Continental Congress from 1776 continuously, until he was elected Governor in 1781, and that during a part of the year for which he had been chosen to the latter office, he was detained as a prisoner at James' Island, near Charleston, S. C. by the British Commander, having been captured in a descent of the Tories upon the Town of Hillsboro' and that his correspondence threw much light upon the history of public events, both State and Continental, during this whole period. I directed it to be transcribed entire, at an expense of \$225. The two folio volumes in which the transcript is contained, are in this Office, and will well repay a perusal by any reader, and furnish abundant resources to the future historian. It is regretted, that a most interesting portion of the letters of Mr. BURKE, were not discovered in time to be copied in their chronological order in these volumes. It consists of his letters, while a delegate in the Continental Congress, to Mr. CASWELL, then Governor of the State, on the condition of public affairs from 1776 to 1780, and contains sketches at some length, of the debates of that body, which sat with closed doors. It seems that the proceedings were required to be kept secret until final action on any measure, but not afterwards. And that his memoranda were preserved, and furnished the basis of reports to the Governor, of the debates on all subjects of interest. These letters have been discovered among the papers of Governor CASWELL, and will be copied with them.

A memorandum of the latter gentleman, left with his family, and describing his papers "deposited in the office of Secretary of State, at the request of the Legislature", has led to the discovery in that office, of all these documents in a good state of preservation. My own leisure has not been sufficient to make the selection from these, and give directions to have them transcribed. And it is my intention, to place them in the hands of a gentleman, who has paid much attention to that period of our history, that they may be properly revised and copied.